

Statement in **SUPPORT** of H.B. 5044, *An Act Concerning Immunizations*
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 19, 2020

This statement represents my own personal views.

As a Connecticut citizen concerned with public health and the safety and wellbeing of school children – and everyone they come in contact with – I support repealing any non-medical exemptions from vaccine regulations for the following reasons:

1. Vaccines are safe and effective. They have proven to eradicate many of the most serious diseases known to infect our species
2. The current so-called “religious exemption” to vaccinations is not based on scientific fact and is also not based on any religious teaching that I know of.
3. It is understood that emotion can have a role in overwhelming fact, as shown in recent articles about the great fear about the new Corona virus (COVID-19), in contrast to two other viruses
 - a. The flu virus, which annually kills thousands (– 88 influenza-related deaths in Connecticut alone last flu season).
 - b. The Rubella virus, which causes measles, which can result in death from pneumonia or encephalitis. This measles-causing virus can spread up to 100 feet, while coronaviruses can travel only about six feet from the infected person.

“The mix of miscalibrated emotion and limited fact... can set in motion a worsening spiral of irrational behavior. ... [and] the solution is to trust data-informed expertise,” per David Desteno, a professor of psychology, in New York Times, February 16, 2020.

Part of your responsibility has to be to trust data-informed expertise to help protect the health and safety. H.B. 5044 is based on such scientific expertise and removes a key risk to public health – the so-called religious exemptions for vaccines.

I therefore sincerely ask that you both co-sponsor and also vote “yes” on H.B. 5044 to eliminate religious exemptions for vaccines.

Thank you,
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